

# The Goodwill Messenger

Published by the Village Church of Cummington

Minister: Rev. Jon Rehmus

Organist: Morgan Markel

Church Office: 634-5508

Service 10:00 AM, 1st & 3rd Sundays

Editor & Graphics: John Maruskin • Reporting & Mailing: Pat Keith

Volume LXVI, Number 1 • February, 2016, P.O. Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026

[cummingtonvillagechurch.org](http://cummingtonvillagechurch.org)

*Village Church—Open and Affirming—You are welcome here*

---

## Minister's Message

Dear Friends,

Repeatedly the question is raised, "What denomination is the Village Church?" Formally, the best answer at present is that we continue with our United Church of Christ (UCC) affiliation while having Unitarian Universalist (UU) ministry. Some applaud this "both/and" approach and others express disappointment that we are not proclaiming ourselves one or the other. In truth we are now part of a growing trend of "community churches" in which denominationalism is de-emphasized in favor of a unique character that fits our people and setting.

However, I will say I'm pleased by our continued affiliation with the UCC, particularly its Massachusetts conference. The Rev. Kelly Gallagher, Associate Conference Minister for our region, has been demonstrative in support of our church and its direction, and the conference president, the Rev. Jim Antal, is one of the best denominational leaders on social witness I've encountered.

---

## Important Church Council Meeting

The meeting will be held Sunday, February 7 following fellowship at 11:30 AM (snow date, Sunday, Feb. 21).

Rev. Jon's contract expires this summer, and a decision must be made as to whether to extend it and if so, with what kind of time/program commitment. The church must also continue to address financial stewardship along with other issues that currently reflect on our energized mission. Members and non-members alike are welcome to the meeting—what's important is your commitment to the Village Church and a desire to have a voice in its future direction.

---

## February Calendar

Thursday 4, 11, 18, 25—Yoga, 4:00–5:30 PM; Silent Meditation 5:45–6:15 PM

Sunday February 7, 10 AM—Imbolc/St. Brigid's Service; Church Council Mtg. 11:30 AM

Saturday February 13, 7 PM—Friday Nite Café: Valentine's Dance/Game Night for Church Benefit

Friday February 19, 7 PM—Friday Nite Jam

Sunday February 21 10 AM—Sunday Service: Theme TBA

Friday February 26, 7 PM—Friday Nite Café: Laurie Israel

Saturday February 27, 6:30 PM—Sky Tour, meet at the church

To rent the church space for classes, concerts, meetings, etc., please call Scott at 634-5084. The church charges a very nominal fee to cover upkeep & heat. We love having the building used!!

Jim has spearheaded the "Lenten Carbon Fast," an excellent ecumenical exercise in getting in touch with both the talk and the walk of addressing global warming. I urge our entire community to sign up at [www.macucc.org/carbonfast](http://www.macucc.org/carbonfast) for a daily email during Lent. Each day the message will combine facts and/or reflection on a facet of this issue with a related, practical suggestion of how we—individually and as a church—might do our share. These daily messages do not depress but rather stir, inspire, and activate in a cumulative way, and I say so based on my own experience with it last year.

Whatever your leaning religiously or denominationally, please join me in the Lenten Carbon Fast which begins Ash Wednesday, February 10.

In Faith and Service,

Jon

---

## Ministry Hours and Peaceful Thursdays

From Rev. Jon: Most Thursday afternoons I am in Cummington and am happy to schedule appointments for mornings and evenings those days as well. Tuesday afternoon is also a time in addition to 1st & 3rd Sundays after lunch when I can often make in-person appointments. I am also glad to talk by phone, and please do call (413-624-3025) and leave a message in emergencies or if you seek 24-hour turn-around. I do not check email every day.

After 4:45 PM on Thursdays, you can find me in our lovely church study. This winter, Darlene Graham and I again invite you to sow awareness and peace into your approach to the weekend with yoga and meditation. See the Calendar for dates and time.

Feel free to attend either program or both. Those who would like to ring the church bells—reminding all of us to breathe peace into our lives—can also arrive at the conclusion of meditation.

---

## Night Sky Tour with Ron & Jon

The Tour, led by Ron Woodland & Jon Rehmus takes place on Saturday, February 27, 6:30 PM at the church (Feb. 28 alternate night in case of cloud cover)

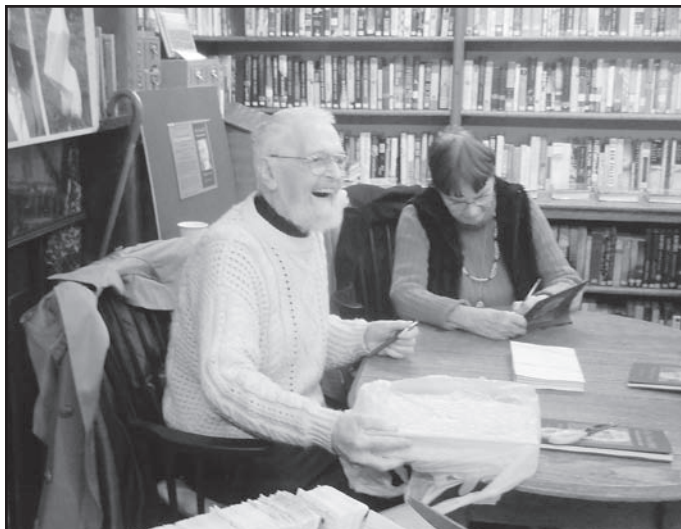
The Earth has moved about the Sun, and it's time to brave the cold to see the Great Lamps of Winter! Combining instrument use and walking observation, we welcome all ages to this quarter's edition of sky watching. Slide presentations and diagrams presented inside will help us warm up between outdoor periods: we may be able to take in the moons of Jupiter, the Winter Hexagon, the star-forming region in Orion—a beautiful night awaits us. Dress in layers with attention to boots, socks, hats, etc. Contact info for Jon is 413-624-3025 if you have questions.

## From the Librarian's Desk

Well, if you were at the Bryant Free Library for the Bill Streeter book-signing of *My Friend Bill: The Life of a Restless Yankee* by the late Paul Schratter on Saturday, January 16th, then you know just how special it was. And if you weren't, then here are a few photos that give you an idea of what you missed.

It doesn't get any better than this!

—Mark

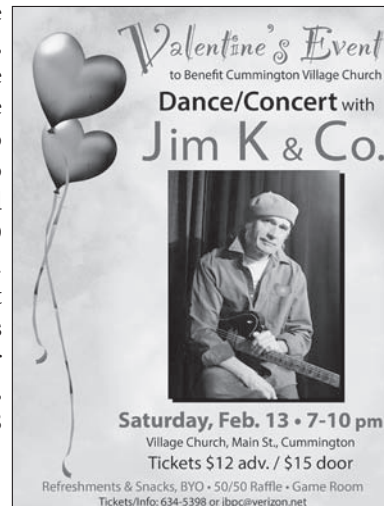


Bill and Elaine Streeter at the book-signing table.

## Valentine's Dance Benefit at Village Church

Saturday, Feb 13, 2016, Concert & Dance Party  
with Jim K & Co.

Chase away those mid-winter blues! On Saturday, February 13, 2016, Village Church is throwing its 3rd Annual Benefit Valentine's Concert & Dance Party, featuring the soulful blues-rock sound of Jim Kaminski and his band. We'll be rolling up the carpets and clearing the hall to make lots of room, so come to listen or come to dance. There will also be a game room for those who want a quieter scene. Dress to impress! Refreshments and snacks will be served, BYO beer or wine. 50/50 Raffle. Tickets \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. 7-10 PM. Proceeds to benefit Village Church. For tickets or more information, contact John Bye, 634-5398 or [jbpc@verizon.net](mailto:jbpc@verizon.net).



## New Organist

The Music Committee of the Village Church is pleased to announce that we have hired a new organist. Her name is Morgan Markel and we invite everyone to come to the next service on February 7 to hear and greet her.



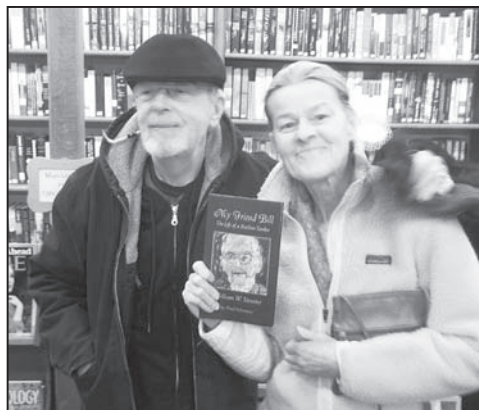
Artist Jeannie Johns and Bill Streeter flank her portrait of Bill which was used on the cover of the book.



Pearl Lynds, a long-time patron and friend of the library.



Conrad Leibenow with Bill and Elaine



Walter Korzec & Fran Henry have their signed copy.



Library Trustee John Maruskin and Earl Streeter.



Bill and Elaine talk to Conrad Leibenow and Elaine Holder

## Friday Night Café

On January 8, the year got off to a big start as Friday Night Café moved into the sanctuary in order to seat a crowd of 100 people. Sarah Stockwell Arthen was scheduled to play and she decided to make her evening a fundraiser for an organization she and many others support: No Fracked Gas in Mass.

Josh and Kim Wachtel, Heather Cupo, Sean Kimball and James Kitchen were on stage with Sarah, and 95–100 people turned out to raise over \$1800 dollars for the group. It was a great night of fantastic music. Sarah Pirtle also came out and sang a song. Rose Wessel spoke about No Fracked Gas in Mass and what people could do to stop the pipeline.

For more information about this effort: <http://www.nofracked-gasinmass.org/act-now/>

If you'd like a sample of the music from that night listen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYFdajrqtY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUivF9DIRqU>



Top: Sarah Stockwell-Arthen leads the group in song. From left: Sean Kimball, Josh Wachtel, James Kitchen, Sarah, Heather Cupo, Kim Wachtel. Center: Kim's got her mojo on. Left: Rosemary Wessel addresses the group.

On Friday, January 22, Rachel Laitman and her Fine Young Fellows—from left, Jason Szafranski on guitar, Jay Cole on drums, and Sean Kimball on bass—entertained a crowd of over 60 people at the Café. This was a fine performance and an example of the good things happening at the Café.



## February at the Friday Night Café

**Saturday, February 13, 7–10 PM**—the now-famous Valentine's Day Dance at the Friday Night café. Please note this Friday Night Café is on *Saturday night* this week only!

**Friday, February 19—Friday Night Jam**—Bring an instrument & a song or just. All levels welcome—3rd Fridays, 7–10. More info: John or Peg @ 634-5398.

**Friday, February 26—Laurie Israel**

Café web page: <http://cummingtonvillagechurch.org/FNC.html>

## Martin Luther King Walk

The gathering at the Church following the 3-day Martin Luther King walk through the hilltowns was wonderful. Thanks to those of you who helped in any way. The feeling of warmth in the room as people ate and chatted with one another was memorable and the Village Church, by offering space, answered the call of its members who have grave concerns about the pipe line and racial injustice.

This walk and its focus on the legacy of Dr. King, struck a chord and the people answered in so many ways. Old and young—they walked, ferried others, provided a bed, abundantly fed, or simply stood on the side of the road, in the cold and wet, and cheered them on. It was truly awesome the way towns worked together.

Over 60 people came to eat at the Village church following the walk. The food came from church members, and people in Ashfield and Conway who had also provided food to the marchers. It was fitting to commemorate Dr. King, who was concerned with economic as well as racial justice, with this walk against the pipeline but for our towns and our beautiful environment.



The marchers form a circle for blessings before dinner.



Above: A room full of hungry people. Left: Three towns contributed the abundance of food

For personal, church needs or questions please contact one of the Deacons, John Maruskin at 634-5320, Susan Riley at 634-8055, Kathleen Knox at 634-8041 or Pat Keith 634-5084 or leave a message at the church 634-5508.

The Goodwill Messenger, deadline for the March issue is February 25, 2016. Any personal news, an event, a business to promote with a paid advertisement or anything else worth noting please send to John at [mrblooz@verizon.net](mailto:mrblooz@verizon.net) or Pat at [patakeith@gmail.com](mailto:patakeith@gmail.com), mail to VCC, PO Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026 or leave it in the drop box, marked GWM located in the back entry-way of the Village Church. Please be sure to include all the details, and a contact number in case we have questions.

Visit VC Church website at [cummingtonvillagechurch.org](http://cummingtonvillagechurch.org)

Goodwill Messenger  
P.O. Box 76  
Cummington, MA 01026

*Schedule of Ongoing Events – all at the Community House unless specified*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Family Center Play Group 9:30–11:30 AM	Finance Office (Tax Collector, Treas., Acct.) open 6–7 PM	Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Transfer Station open 7–11 AM
Veterans Agent 9–11 AM	Board of Health 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues. 7 PM (2nd floor)	Council on Aging Office Hours 9–noon (C.H. Annex)	Town Clerk 6–7:30 PM (2nd floor)	Family Center Play Group 9:30–11:30 AM	Bryant Library open 8:30 AM–12:30 PM
Assessor Office Hours 9:30–11:30 AM (upstairs in C.H.)		Bryant Library open 6–9 PM	Selectboard meets 7 PM		
Bryant Library open 6–9 PM		Transfer Station open 5:30–7:30 PM	Building Inspector 7–9 PM (upstairs in C. H.)		
		Planning Board 2nd, 4th weeks 7 PM	Board of Assessors meets 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursdays 6–8 PM		

If you would like an electronic copy instead of a paper one, include your email on the form below and we will email the Goodwill Messenger to you.

**Free computer services offered by Ken Graf to Cummington senior citizens**

634-8860

<http://kensstuff.blogspot.com>

Yes! I would like to subscribe to the Goodwill Messenger.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation of \$10.00 for a one year subscription.

Please make checks payable to: Goodwill Messenger and mail your payment with this form to:  
Village Congregational Church, PO Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026